

Band of brothers by stephen ambrose



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This book report is written in fulfillment of the requirements for (class subject e. g. Hist. 108) under Professor (professor's name). Band of Brothers is a novel based on the events of World War II, emphasizing more on the lives of the soldiers, particularly the paratroopers of Easy company, 506 regiment of the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army. Paratroopers are trained soldiers launched into battle by parachute into areas inaccessible by aerial bombing.

Written by Stephen Ambrose and published by Simon and Schuster in 2001, Band of Brothers, has been an all time best seller which was made into a mini series by HBO in association with Dreamworks, edited by Billy Fox and directed by Phil Alden Robinson. Life in the military has always been a fascination of many young men. All the amazing weapons and gears that they use in battle, the handsome uniforms, not to mention the recognition and accolade that one can receive sounds like a promising career. A priceless honor which brings pride that lasts beyond your lifetime.

If one decides to pursue a career in the armed forces, one must be ready to make all the adjustments and face the challenges, not only that of a rigorous training, but a life in the battle field. A soldier's life, activity and relationships literally changes the moment training commences. The armed forces is a stratified society full of rigidity. A soldier has to understand the hierarchy and chain of command and must learn to obey first before complaining (not that one is allowed to complain). The inability to perform a particular duty, due to whatever reason, is inexcusable, therefore punishable. A soldier's life is full of misconceptions.

Civilians mostly view them as fortunate individuals who enjoy a lot of privileges both from the government and the private sector. Stephen Ambrose used a lot of characters to portray the lives of soldiers in Easy company. Captain Herbert M. Sobel was the commanding officer of Easy company in the 2nd battalion 506th parachute infantry regiment of the 101st airborne division. He was very strict and usually rude, squeezing the energy of his soldiers during training. He doesn't tolerate anything that he feels like not tolerating to the point of just simply finding errors on his soldiers just for the heck of it.

Although disliked by most of his soldiers, his attitude towards training and his ways of implementing training schedule and activities helped in the honing of his soldiers' skills and intelligence. In the mini series, David Schwimmer played the role of Captain Sobel. Lt. Richard D. Winters, played by actor Damian Lewis, was the second in command of Captain Sobel. Lt. Winters outdo Captain Sobel in the field. Although a Jew, he was respected and well-liked by the soldiers. Scott Grimes played the role of technical sergeant Donald Malarkey who was refused admission to the Marines due to dental issues.

He also tried Army Air Corps, but due to math requirements, still he was not admitted. He only became a member of E company (Easy company) when he volunteered to be a part of the paratroops of the United States Army. He was awarded the Bronze star medal for his participation on D-Day's Brecourt Manor Assault in Normandy. Captain Ronald Speirs was initially company D's (Dog company) platoon leader. During the end of the Battle of the Bulge in

Bastogne, Captain Speirs was reassigned to command Easy company. 2nd Lt. Clifford Carwood Lipton a. k. a Lip, joined E company in 1942.

From Private he was promoted to company first sergeant, then to second lieutenant. Band of Brothers is a historical documentary novel telling the story of the lives and experiences of airborne soldiers during World War II. 1942 marked the year when the United States Army Airborne Division formed the second battalion of the 506th parachute infantry regiment in Toccoa, Georgia (Ambrose 2001). The story began in Toccoa, Georgia when the U. S. army is preparing for battle against the Germans. Under the command and rigid training of Captain Herbert M.

Sobel, the soldiers of E company endured rigorous and severe training. Their company was known to be the best in the regiment and Captain Sobel prided himself on that; and because of their reputation, they were always given the toughest assignments. E company trained for ninety days which included lectures, physical exercises, obstacle courses and field simulations after which, they were deployed to England on board a ship in preparation for the invasion of Hitler's Third Reich. Their task is to penetrate enemy lines and subjugate German Artillery.

On June 6, 1944 in Normandy, the soldiers had their first jump which did not go as planned. Due to heavy firing on the ground, planes carrying the paratroopers flew at high speeds with only a short distance from the ground (Ambrose 2001). One of the planes got hit, went on fire and crash to the ground. Nevertheless, the troop was able to arrive at Carentan, gained control of the area then they flew back to Aldbourne. On September 17, 1944, the troops made their second jump in Holland which was executed

perfectly. After completing their mission in the area, they also fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

The paratroopers arrived in Germany on the second day of April, 1945 where the enemies finally surrendered. They celebrated their victory in Austria where they drank alcohol and took a lot of things from the Germans like jewelry and lugers. When the war was over, they parted ways and took different paths. As often as possible, a reunion is made in New Orleans where they all could catch up while remembering the years they spent at war. My impression on the book is positive. Stephen Ambrose was able to make World War II a more relatable event to ordinary people.

He was able to show two perspectives of the story - officers' point of view and the soldiers' point of view. The story was able to show that an army officer is not perfect. He might be very good at one thing, but he still has his flaws, like Captain Sobel who was very good at training men but performs poorly on the field. Soldiers are also human beings who feel fear, stress, anxiety and bleeds inside out; but the important thing is ones ability to endure whatever hardships that one has to face in carrying out his duty to the country and the people. They are always together and yet, they feel alone in the battle field.

War means death, and these men had to psyche themselves up to be ready in all aspects - physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally. Focusing on one particular battalion like Easy company, the author was able to present the lives of soldiers in the battlefield. Their 'humanness' were more felt and their bond as brothers in their cause was strongly established. However, Ambrose's exposure of their 'humanness' can be a downside as this could

lead to debates and issues regarding the deployment of soldiers to war in support of allied nations under fire.

But then again, the personal approach employed by Ambrose in writing the story made the events of World War II more relevant in the lives of people.

Band of Brothers enabled us to understand, at a deeper level, the struggles and hardships that soldiers face. True, recognitions and accolades are given, but such can only be enjoyed by them if they are lucky to be alive.

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